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ABSTRACT

This document describes the REACH Program, an alternative school program for students who have been suspended for drug or alcohol related offenses, which includes a short-term (7-day) suspension program designed to provide education and assessment and a long-term suspension program which provides 3 to 4 hours of counseling and education per day for 45 days or the remainder of the semester, whichever is greater. Counseling goals listed include: (1) providing parents with education about adolescent substance abuse and strategies to deal with it; (2) educating students about drugs and alcohol and helping them explore their attitudes and substance use; (3) teaching skills to help students to deal with peer pressure and avoid trouble; and (4) recommending community resources and promoting healthy alternatives. Three treatment phases discussed include a denial phase, a phase in which the student accepts that substance abuse has created problems in his or her life, and a phase in which the student commits to abstinence. School work requirements for the programs are discussed and relevant sections of the school code are included. (NB)

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REACH PROGRAM

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REACH PROGRAM

Purpose: The REACH Program is an alternative school which provides a program for students who have been suspended for drug/alcohol related offenses. The REACH Program provides for two programs: 1) 7 day suspension (short term) which is designed to provide education and assessment; and 2) long term suspension which provides 3 – 4 hours of counseling and education per day. Long term students cannot return to their home school until recommended by the staff or until the required 45 days or semester is completed.

COUNSELING GOALS

* To provide parents with basic education and information concerning adolescent chemical use/ abuse.

* To work in cooperation with parenlts to establish an individual chemical assessment for each student.

* To provide parents with strategies for dealing effectively with their childs chemical abuse.

* To recommend community resources as needed.

* To provide students with basic drug/alcohol information and awareness of the stages of chemical involvement.

* To help students explore their own drug use attitudes, use patterns and consequences.

* To confront individual denial systems by utilizing peer and counselor feedback techniques.

* To teach 'Refusal Skills' that help students to deal with peer pressure. The goals of these skills are to avoid trouble, keep friends and have a good time.

* To prmote helathy alternatives (natural highs).

* To help students establish short and long term goals regarding abstinence.

The short term counseling/education component does not provide treatment for primary chemical dependency. However, the program can positively affect most students' drug attitudes and behaviors. Also, the assessment process provides information that is useful to parents and counselors in planning strategies to successfully deal with student chemical abuse.

In addition to the above goals, the following reflects specific counseling goals for the long term program.

* To encourage students to abstain from mind altering chemicals. (Drug/Alcohol Group)

  Upon entering the program, the majority of students do not recognize their drug use as a problem. Therefore to break through the denial, the drug/alcohol group focuses extensively on the signs and symptoms of chemical use, the psychological and physiological stages of addiction, family related issues, health problems and inter-personal conflicts. To achieve maximum results in breaking through the denial, a non-threatening educational approach is utilized by presenting drug/alcohol information, reviewing films and listening to personal accounts recovering addicts from the community. Throughout this segment of counseling, students are encouraged to relate and discuss their own drug related patterns and problems.

* To develop an insight group which will enable students to evaluate, change and strengthen personal behaviors, attitudes and values. (Insight Group)

  This group focuses on the identification, confrontation and taking responsibility for ones behavior. To enhance this process, the students have been given ownership of their group. They have established specific group rules and are responsible for confronting in appropriate behavior and for giving consequences for such behaviors. Students not only confront negative behavior, but also identify and encourage positive change and growth of individuals. This aspect of counseling continuously addresses the difficult process of recognizing, understanding and sharing feelings.

* To provide a working knowledge of basic communication and an understanding to 'Survival Skills in a Social Jungle'. (Communications Group)

  This particular group focuses on helping students learn basic communication and social skills. The students are taught skills in verbal and nonverbal communication, refusal skills, problem solving, decision making and negotiations. The entire process utilizes lecture and role playing.

TREATMENT PHASES

The 'Treatment Phases' have been developed to encourage students to challenge themselves and to experience personal successess throughout their involvement in the REACH Program.

Phase I	Primarily a denial phase. The student is not willing to assess his own drug use and the problems it is creating in his/her life. Unwilling to work on abstinence.
Phase II	Acceptance. Admits that chemical use has created problems in his/her life. Willing to decrease use and/or work towards abstinence.
Phase III	Acceptance that chemical involvement is the source of personal and social problems. Commits to abstinence.

It is our hope that counseling will provide a meaningful and enriching experience for students where each new success will lead to abstinence and a sense of self-confidence and self-respect.

EDUCATION

Students suspended for short term will spend seven days in the program. The home school will provide the student with assigned school work in each required class. This work is monitored and evaluated by the teachers in the REACH Program. A completed or not completed grading system is used. The teacher has the right to assign make-up test or any other assignments the student missed during their suspension. The teacher may give a letter grad for all work during the suspension.

Students suspended for long term will spend forty-five days or a semester, which ever is longer in the program. For these students the REACH Program teachers become their regular teachers. All teaching is done on an individual basis using contract format. A student will receive a contract each week for each required subject. At the end of the week work will be turned in, corrected and the student will be tested over the material. A letter grade will be given for each subject. All students' work will be retained by the REACH Program unless other arrangements have been made. All students are required to have parent/teacher conference upon entering and exiting the program.

451 Suspensions and Expulsions

451.1 Suspensions

The Superintendent and/or the principal has the power to suspend students for sufficient reason. These suspesions include in-house and out-of-school suspensions. Special attention will be given to the development of procedures appropriate to elementary, junior high, and senior high students. All suspensions shall be accomplhished pursuant to the procedures in the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities. (See Policy 450.2 - Attachment A.)

451.2 Expulsion

Students may be expelled only upon action by the School Board. The grounds for expulsion are as provided in A.S. 14.30.045. Expulsions may be accomplished only in accordance with the procedures established in a Statement of Rights and Responsibilities. (See Policy 450.2)

451.21 Return from Expulsion

1. A letter of application must be submitted for reinstatement that includes:

   a. evidence acceptable to the District that the student is enrolled in or has completed a drug/alcohol counseling program recognized by the District.

   b. a statement by an authorized representative of the counseling program that the student, who is seeking readmission is no longer under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs in any respect, and is not likely to use or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while attending classes or other school sponsored activities.

   c. evidence that the student who is seeking readmission has had a urine analysis at a District recognized lab within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the letter for readmission by the District and such analysis indicates that the student is free of alcohol and/or drugs, and has been free of alcohol and/or drugs for as long a period as the test can accurately measure, or since the effective date of the denial of the student from attendance, which ever is shorter.

   d. a statement signed by the student seeking readmission and a parent or guardian of such student if the student is unemancipated that the student agrees to participate in a program of monthly urine analysis for one school year upon the return of the student to the District.

2. The student must participate in a monthly urine analysis program at a District recognized laboratory for one school year upon the students return to the District.

3. Failure to submit a letter meeting the required conditions will forestall any consideration by the School Board of the students return. Failure to comply with the monthly urine analysis program or evidence of drug or alcohol use indicated by the analysis or possession and/or use of drugs or alcohol will result in recommendation to the School Board for expulsion of the student from the School District.

451.3 Educational Opportunities for Expelled Students

Students who have been expelled from the Anchorage School District educational program will be readmitted only by action of the School Board.

451.4 Illegal Drug/Alcohol

a. Appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against any student who is determined to have been in possession or to have used illegal drugs or alcohol.

b. In case of emergency medical situations, such as respiratory distress, first aid should be administered immediately and transportation provided to hospital emergency room. Parents/guardians will be notified to meet student at hospital.

c. The actual or attempted sale of, use of, possession of intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs or substances purported to be illegal drugs while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in suspension and/or expulsion. Students who engage in the above activities off-campus and who return to the school grounds or to school sponsored activities will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

The procedures provided by the District's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (see Policy 450.2) shall be observed. Disciplinary action shall be taken by the school administrator regardless of whether or not criminal charges or prosecution result.

(1) A first offense by a student who trades, buys, uses or possesses intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs, or substances purported to be illegal drugs while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in the following action:

a) Seven (7) days suspension from school.

b) Required parent/guardian conference prior to readmission with the unit principal.

(2) A second offense by a student who trades, buys, uses or possesses intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs, or substances purported to be illegal drugs while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in the following action:

a) Suspension for 45 days or the remainder of the semester, whichever is greater.

b) Referral to the drug suspension option program.

c) Required parent/guardian/student conference prior to readmission to school.

(3) A third offense by a student who trades, buys, uses or possesses intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs, or substances purported to be illegal drugs while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in a recommendation to the School Board for expulsion.

(4) A student apprehended on a first offense for selling or attempting to sell intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs or substances purported to be illegal drugs while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in same action as in 451.4(e) above.

(5) A second offense by a student for selling or attempting to sell intoxicating liquor, illegal drugs, substances designed to look like illegal drugs or substances purported to be illegal drugs will result in a recommendation to the Board for expulsion.

d. Students who have been suspended will be denied participation in ohter District-sponsored activities during any period when suspensions are in effect, and for such additional periods as may appear appropriate in each individual case.

e. When a student is suspended for 45 days or more, he or she must participate in the Student/Parent Educational Counseling Therapy Program prior to re-entry into student's home school.

451.5 Suspension or Expulsion of Special Education Students

The Superintendent shall establish uniform procedures which insures the right of special education students to an appropriate education when special education students are suspended or recommended for expulsion.

452.6 Assault Upon Teachers

Assault of teachers by students is prohibited and will result in suspension and/or a recommendation for expulsion.

(Section 451 Revised by School Board on June 25, 1984)